

Network News

The newsletter of the
Salem Interfaith Hospitality Network

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December 2007

SEASONS GREETINGS!

What a difference a day makes? Yesterday I sitting here hoping the window was going to keep me safe as the winter storm raged outside. This afternoon the sun is shining and it looks to be a very pleasant day, full of hope for the season. As I sit here I am thinking about the families we have helped this past year: thirty families who have a safe roof over their heads for protection in a storm. They have an apartment or house they can call home because of the opportunity Salem IHN provided them.

They came to us as guests from a variety of situations: fleeing a domestic violence situation in another state; being displaced because of pest infestation and mold; finding themselves homeless because of decisions made by employers, family, friends, or just poor choices they made themselves; sometimes moving just to better their situation.

Kevin and Sandy were one such family. They came to the Salem area seeking better medical care than they had in Nevada for Kevin. Kevin is on the national waiting list for a kidney transplant, he is also blind from diabetes. Sandy had taken on the tasks of not only finding housing for their family, but also the mounds of paperwork necessary for Kevin's medical care, herself being in the last trimester of pregnancy. Their goal was simple: be in their own home before the baby came.

We thought it would be a short stay, but as is often the case, hidden issues arose. Greg, our Family Case Manager, was able to help Sandy weave in and out of the necessary agencies that were helping. During this time of waiting the volunteers at the churches

cared for them like their own. Finally, they had found an apartment. Once that piece of their puzzle was in place the others rapidly fell together. Through God's grace and the care and generosity of Salem IHN volunteers and staff, their goal was met. Their son was not so eager to come into this world, waiting two weeks after the due date, but he came, at home, healthy, as they had hoped.

I can fill a volume with stories of the families who have been our guests since I became Executive Director. We have had the privilege of affecting change in these families' lives because of your generosity. We operate on a modest budget and I don't believe, for the dollar, you will find a better investment in the lives of these families. In November I challenged you to match \$_____ in grant funds we were awaiting word on. Unfortunately we did not receive those grants which makes this request the more urgent. To date we have received \$ _____ towards that challenge. Will you please consider a generous end of the year donation to help up finish the year strong and prepare us for the families who will come to us in the new year!

Thank you for all your generosity and may the blessing of this season be your!

Richard R. Zielke
Executive Director

Put it on your Calendar

**The Salem IHN Annual Fundraising Breakfast
Wednesday April 3rd, 2008
Mission Mill Museum**

Helping Communities Help Homeless Families

Day Center needs

You guys are totally awesome! The response to the requests in our last newsletter were cool – we now have enough ties for our guests to look sharp in interviews. *And* we got some very nice VHS videos (special thanks for the *Raiders of the Lost Ark* movies!).

Our weekend van driver, Jim Dougherty, recently inventoried our downstairs Room of Supplies (which is organized by the Fabulous Wednesday Volunteer Ladies).

Here's a list of items we can use for our guests:

- ❖ Laundry detergent
- ❖ Laundry bleach
- ❖ Dishwasher detergent
- ❖ 3M scrubbies (those green flat things that are great for cleaning pots)
- ❖ Garbage bags (3 gal and 10 gal)
- ❖ Baby wipes (you would not *believe* how dirty a baby can get!)

Special Thanks to:

- Dan Sandau and Sandau Enterprises for the donation of grass seed for the Day Center.
- Randy and the folks at Power Chevrolet for helping one of our guests to get into a vehicle.

Greg goes full time

Greg Kornspan is our Case Manager, which means that he's the main person who works with interviewing families for intake, keeping families from becoming homeless, and helping our guests find affordable places to live.

(If you've ever met Greg, he was probably talking on the phone at the time.)

For the last ?? months, Greg has been only part-time (he drove a school bus before and after his shift with us). Starting June ??, though, he's now full-time! So he'll be able to help many more families!

Of course, our phone bill will also be going up, but hey – it's a small price to pay for not having to say, "Sorry, you'll have to call back tomorrow."

This newsletter was put together by Salem Interfaith Hospitality Network. Specifically, Richard and Robert with assistance and graphic cleanup from the amazing Laura Gregg. Be sure to keep Angie in your prayers as her due date approaches—we're hoping for a happy, healthy, at-home baby!



Annual Fundraising Breakfast

As you know, if you were there (and if you weren't – well, you missed a heck of a great breakfast) our annual fundraising breakfast was a heck of a great breakfast.

Jinx Brandt has the place in stitches with her comments and Sydney Brewster gave a super speech that encouraged and challenged us all.

Monthly and annual family statistics

Category	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007*
# Families	25	32	26	39	16
# Adults	33	47	36	59	26
# Children	51	65	55	73	31
# Total Guests	84	112	91	132	57
Avg. length stay (days)	49	37	48	29	24
% Occupancy (bed nights)	75%	80%	88%	75%	80%

* So far

Fall Music Night

Thanks to the fabulous Laura Gregg (St. Paul's Episcopal) for stepping forward to organize our Fall Music Night, set for September 16, 2007. Be sure to plan to attend, because it promises to be a crackin' good time!

Welcome to a new support congregation

And a big welcome goes out to the totally awesome folks at Judson Baptist Church (in the Southeast part of Salem). Asked by their buddies over at Calvary Baptist to lend a hand, the Judson Baptists came up with 60 volunteers to assist in cooking meals, being evening hosts, and overnight hosts.

There's no way that the staff could even begin to take care of our guests without all the help provided by our volunteers. While we have two full-time and two-part staff, we have the equivalent of FIVE full-time people in volunteers! That's over 800 people providing over 10,000 hours of work every year!

Yow!

So we're thrilled to welcome another batch of Baptists to lend us a hand!
